IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) In a vehicle comprising a first device and a second device and an active network communicatively coupling the first device and the second device, wherein the active network is configured to provide a plurality of communication paths between the first device and the second device, and wherein a communication path of the plurality of communication paths includes a loop.

2. (Original) The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network comprises a plurality of active network elements coupled by connection media.

3. (Previously Presented) The vehicle of claim 2, wherein at least one of the active network elements comprises a switch.

4. (Previously Presented) The vehicle of claim 2, wherein at least one of the active network elements comprises a bridge.

5. (Previously Presented) The vehicle of claim 2, wherein at least one of the active network elements comprises a router.

6. (Original) The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network is a packet data network.

7. (Original) The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the loop couples a first active network element of the plurality of active network elements to a second active network element of the plurality of active network elements.

8. (Original) The vehicle of claim 7, wherein the loop has a loop data rate different than a path data rate of the communication paths.

9. (Original) The vehicle of claim 7, wherein the loop comprises an active network element.

10. (Original) The vehicle of claim 7, wherein the loop comprises a plurality of active network elements.

11. (Original) The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the loop connects the first device and the second device.

12. (Original) The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network comprises a multi-drop topology.

13. (Original) The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network comprises a ring topology.

14. (Previously Presented) A vehicle communication network comprising: an active network comprising a plurality of network elements coupled by a plurality of communication links joining the network elements, the plurality of communication links being arranged to communicate data packets between the network elements; a vehicle including the active network; a first device; and a second device, wherein the first device and the second device are communicatively coupled by the active network; wherein a first network element and a second network element are coupled with a communication link using a first network protocol, the second network element coupled to another network element different from the first network element with a communication link using a second network protocol.

15. (Previously Presented) The vehicle communication network of claim 14, wherein at least one of the network elements comprises an element selected from the group of elements consisting of a switch, bridge, and router.

16. (Previously Presented) The vehicle communication network of claim 14, wherein at least one of the first, and second, network protocols are specified in accordance with a shared-access bus protocol.

17. (Previously Presented) The vehicle communication network of claim 14, wherein at least one of the first, and second network protocols is not a shared-access bus protocol.

18. (Previously Presented) The vehicle communication network of claim 14, wherein at least one of the protocols comprises one of CAN, LIN, J1850, TTP, Flexray and MOST bus protocols.

19. (Currently Amended) The vehicle communication network of claim 14, wherein one of the first network element and second network element is coupled to a communication loop.

20. (Currently Amended) The vehicle communication network of claim 19, wherein the communication loop couples the first network element to the second network element and wherein the first network protocol is a loop network protocol.

21. (Currently Amended) The vehicle communication network of claim 20, wherein the loop network protocol uses a data rate different than ~~one of the and~~ the second network protocols.

22. (Currently Amended) The vehicle communication network of claim 19, wherein the communication loop connects the first device and the second device.